



Pacific Queen scrapbooks, 1858-1966 (bulk 1933-1955)

HDC 1295
SAFR 21354
SAFR-0693

Extent

7 folders housed in (1) 16 x 20 x 3 inch box, containing 2 disassembled scrapbooks, with some original pages duplicated (originals discarded).

Date note

Circa 1858, 1909, 1933-1957 and 1966, bulk, 1933-1955

Creator

Kissinger, Rose

Biography and History

The original name of the PACIFIC QUEEN was the BALCLUTHA. Built in 1886 in Glasgow, Scotland, the BALCLUTHA was one of hundreds of ships that carried grain from California's San Joaquin and Sacramento Valleys to Europe. The ship also carried European goods, such as pig iron and scotch whiskey, to San Francisco. In the mid-1890s, it traveled around the world, bringing goods from other ports, such as wool from New Zealand, back to England.

In 1899 the vessel was transferred to the Hawaiian registry and BALCLUTHA became part of the prosperous Pacific Coast lumber trade, sailing north to Puget Sound, then onto Australia. It was the last ship to fly the flag of the Hawaiian Kingdom. In 1901, a special act of Congress admitted BALCLUTHA to the American registry so it could engage in trade between American ports.

Subsequently, the Alaska Packers Association, a San Francisco-based firm that harvested and canned salmon, chartered the BALCLUTHA to carry supplies and men north to Alaska. After the ship ran aground in 1904, the Packers Association purchased the ship for \$500. The firm did extensive repairs and renamed the vessel STAR OF ALASKA. It regularly carried supplies and cannery workers to Alaska in the spring and returned to San Francisco with cases of canned salmon in September. In 1930, STAR OF ALASKA was the only sailing ship the Packers Association sent to the salmon fishing fields (they once had a fleet of 35). The firm retired the vessel when it returned in September.

Attracted by the knowledge that genuine full-rigged sailing ships were fast becoming obsolete, Frank and Rose Kissinger purchased the STAR from the Packers Association in 1933 for \$5,000 and renamed it the PACIFIC QUEEN. The couple, who were married in 1932, lived on board, making it their home as well as their livelihood. They exhibited it as a "pirate ship" up and down the West Coast and leased it for use in films, the most

famous being *Mutiny on the Bounty*. The International Exposition at Treasure Island in 1939 proved especially lucrative for the Kissingers, as the ship earned enough for them to pay off their debts.

However, during World War II, with pier space at San Francisco's Embarcadero dedicated to the war effort, the ship was relegated to a mud flat in Sausalito. There, the PACIFIC QUEEN deteriorated and was nearly reduced to scrap metal for the war effort. After the war ended, the Kissingers were denied a berth on the Embarcadero, so they had the ship towed to Long Beach – where they displayed her as the last of a dying breed of sailing ships. In the early fifties, they moved the ship back north, to Sausalito, and began restoring it to its former glory. Frank Kissinger died of a heart attack while working on the ship in November 1952. He left the PACIFIC QUEEN to Rose, who was one of the few women sailing ship masters licensed in the U.S. Kissinger, who was born around 1902 on a small farm in Michigan, taught navigation to Navy personnel during World War II and to Merchant Marines preparing for exams to earn their mates' or masters' papers. She developed a celestial navigation aid, which she patented in 1944, and which the Navy adopted in its instruction courses.

In 1954, the San Francisco Maritime Museum bought the ship from Rose Kissinger for \$25,000. With help from the local community, which donated labor, materials and money, the museum restored the vessel, rechristened her BALCLUTHA and put her on public display. BALCLUTHA became part of the National Park Service in 1978 and, in 1985, it was designated a National Historic Landmark. The vessel is truly a national treasure. The BALCLUTHA was one of the last deep-water, full rigged sailing ships to fly the American flag, and the last square rigger of the hundreds that called San Francisco its home port. Only five or six remain in the world, and most of those are floating museums in European ports.

(taken, primarily, from “Balclutha History,”
<http://www.nps.gov/safr/historyculture/balclutha-history.htm> and scrapbook articles)

Scope and Content

This collection is available for use.

These two scrapbooks, compiled by Rose Kissinger, document more than 20 years of history of one of the San Francisco Maritime National Historic Park's premier exhibits, the BALCLUTHA. The BALCLUTHA is one of the last surviving steel-hulled, square-rigged sailing ships from the 19th Century. The scrapbooks provide a detailed record of the years 1933-1954, when Rose and her husband, Frank, owned, lived on and exhibited the ship, which they had named the PACIFIC QUEEN.

Scrapbook 1 is predominantly composed of clippings from California newspapers and maritime periodicals from 1933-1946. There are a few photos, some personal correspondence and a copy of Rose Kissinger's *Navigator's Time Indicator*, a visual training aid for navigators that she patented in 1944. There are also copies of other materials, such as reproductions of Lyle Galloway pen and ink sketches of whaling voyages (dated 1966), a passenger ticket from the CHIEFTAN (dated 1858) and maps.

Scrapbook 2 is a continuation of the first book and is predominantly composed of clippings from 1946-1955. It also includes a copy of a radio script from an interview Rose Kissinger gave in 1946, a copy of her agreement with the San Francisco Maritime Museum and a museum press release regarding purchase and restoration of the ship.

There is also one folder of clippings that had not been placed in a scrapbook. Many of these may be duplicates.

The original scrapbooks were compilations of clippings glued onto navigational charts and placed in plastic sleeves. The books were bound together with leather cords. The clippings were photocopied for preservation purposes, but the original order, which was largely chronological, was maintained. Mrs. Kissinger had numbered the pages chronologically, but they got slightly out of order when the books were bound.

Arrangement:

Original order maintained.

Folder List:

Number 1, Circa 1858, 1909, 1933-1946, 1966 (Folders 1 & 2)

Number 2, 1946-1955 (Folders 3 & 4)

Loose Pages, 1933-1957 (Folder 5)

Primary Documents in Need of Conservation, Scrapbooks 1 & 2, 1933-1955 (Folders 6 & 7)

Provenance:

The scrapbooks were donated by Rose Kissinger's nephew, Robert L. Stevens, on May 18, 1993.

Notes:

All of the pages of clippings were photocopied. Some photographs and other original documents were removed from the scrapbooks if they were in good shape. Some primary documents could not safely be removed from the scrapbook pages; these pages have been saved and are separated from the photocopies by archival bond paper.

The scrapbook pages were placed in non-archival plastic sleeves. Many of the pages were removed from the sleeves for photocopying, but some were not because a lot of them are moldy. In addition, many pages contained numerous clippings that had come unglued, so they were kept in sleeves to avoid losing papers (some originals are now loose). The empty plastic sleeves were discarded. A decision has been made to make an attempt to preserve all the primary source documents in the collection by removing them from their backing and from the plastic, and to keep them in addition to the user copies. A decision was made to discard clippings that were not attached to any kind of unique primary document, as the available photocopies contain the same informational content.

Condition: Poor to Fair

Associated Materials:

These are some of the related collections researchers can find at the San Francisco Maritime National Historic Park:

BALCLUTHA (1886, ship, 3m)

Kissinger, Rose (Donor) – Collection, 1908-1950, SAFR 9556, HDC 0528

Rose Kissinger Photo Collection, ca. 1950, SAFR 17730 (one photo of her aboard the Pacific Queen), P88-033

Charles Watt Photograph, 1933, undated, SAFR 19227, P78-283a

Karl Kortum collection, HDC1084

Karl Kortum photographs, [ca. 1953]-1978, SAFR 19532, P78-493

MARIPOSA (passenger liner), MONTEREY (passenger liner) press kit and PACIFIC QUEEN (built 1886, ship, 3m) correspondence, 1956-1957, Undated, SAFR 20030, HDC 01220

BALCLUTHA Records, 1953-1955, SAFR 17383, HDC 0271

BALCLUTHA (1886, ship, 3m), SAFR 19584, HDC 01167

Ship PACIFIC QUEEN Document Collection, 1935-1936, SAFR 17646, Xeroxed scrapbook, HDC 0385

Karl Kortum, *To acquire the Pacific Queen*, [1995]. VM 6.5 B31 K67 1995a

Added Entries/Indexing Terms

BALCLUTHA (museum ship) (local subject index)

Square-riggers—history (LOC)

STAR OF ALASKA (ship) (local subject index)

Collection processed by:

Marjorie Bryer, August 2007